July 2026

ENERGY AND RATEPAYER ADVOCACY DIVISION

The Energy Advocate

MASSACHUSETTS ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

About our newsletter

Welcome to the summer edition of The Energy Advocate! This newsletter is brought to you by the Energy and Ratepayer Advocacy (ERA) Division of the Attorney General's Office (AGO). At ERA, our team works hard on your behalf to ensure safe, reliable, and affordable service from the state's investor-owned electric, gas, and water utility companies. As Massachusetts seeks to achieve its climate goals, ERA supports cost-effective investments in clean energy while also advocating to keep unnecessary charges off your utility bills.

ERA represents the interests of utility customers before the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU), ISO-New England, New England Power Pool, and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Everyday we are working hard to lower your electric and gas bills at the state, regional, and federal levels.

Our newsletter provides updates on ratepayer impacts, resources to help customers manage utility bills, and energy and cost-saving tips.
Read the first edition of The Energy Advocate here.

Ratepayer Information Corner

OVERVIEW OF YOUR ELECTRIC BILL

As summer approaches, you may experience higher electric bills because air conditioning (A/C) and fans use electricity to keep your home cool. Meanwhile, if you use gas heating, your gas bills should be lower in the spring and summer as you stop heating your home. In this section, we cover some general information about your electric bill.

Who is my electric utility?

In Massachusetts, there are three electric utilities regulated by the DPU—National Grid, Eversource, and Unitil. These corporate utilities are investor-owned, meaning they are private, for-profit companies. Alternatively, about 14% of electric customers receive electric service through a locally-owned utility called a municipal light plant (MLP). MLP rates are not regulated by the DPU. You can find your investor-owned electric utility or MLP on the DPU's webpage: Find My Electric, Gas, and Water Company.

What is on my electric bill?

Your bill can be broken down into the following components:

Supply: the cost of the electricity itself.

Monthly supply cost = how much electricity you used during the billing period in kilowatt-hours (kWh) * cost of electricity

Customers have several electric supply options to choose from (see "Overview of Electric Supply").

Electricity is measured in units known as kilowatt-hours (kWh). Kilowatt-hours measure how much electricity an appliance or device uses over time.

1. Conversions:
    - 1,000 watts = 1 kilowatt
    - 1 kilowatt-hour (kWh) = Using 1 kilowatt of electricity over 1 hour
2. Examples:
    - A 100-watt light bulb turned on for 10 hours would consume 1 kWh of electricity (100 watts * 10 hours = 1000 watt-hours = 1 kilo-watt-hour)
    - A 1,000-watt microwave turned on for 1 hour would consume 1 kWh of electricity
    - A 1,500-watt heat pump turned on for 1 hour would consume 1.5 kWh of electricity

Delivery: the costs of the infrastructure and labor needed to bring electricity to your home; utility revenue; and various statewide programs (such as energy efficiency).

Delivery charges have both Fixed and Volumetric charges:

- Fixed charge: a flat monthly Customer Charge, which covers the costs of connecting you to the delivery system, including metering, service lines, and customer service.
- Volumetric charges: the more electricity you use, the more you pay. Each volumetric charge on your bill has its own price per kWh, so your total costs for that charge will increase as your electricity usage increases. Volumetric charges include the Distribution Charge, Transmission Charge, Energy Efficiency Charge, Net Metering Recovery Surcharge, and Distributed Solar Charge.

Example: Distribution Charge = how much electricity you used (kWh) * Distribution rate ($ per kWh)

Sample Bill:

MONTHLY ELECTRIC BILL STATEMENT

SUPPLY SERVICES				
Supplier Name:	Utility	OR		
	Town/City	OR		
	Competitive Supplier			
Cost of Supply	0.14840 $/kWh Rate of electricity	*	500kWh Amount of electricity used	=$74.20
		Total Supply Services		**$74.20**

DELIVERY SERVICES				
Fixed Customer Charge				=$10.00
Volumetric Charge #1	0.090 $/kWh	*	500 kWh	=$45.00
Volumetric Charge #2	0.070 $/kWh	*	500 kWh	=$35.00
Volumetric Charge #3	0.025 $/kWh	*	500 kWh	=$12.50
	Rate of volumetric charges		Amount of electricity used	
		Total Delivery Services		**$102.50**

TOTAL BILL (Supply + Delivery)	**$176.70**

On these next two pages, we focus only on your electric supply, not delivery services

OVERVIEW OF ELECTRIC SUPPLY

What are my electric supply options?

As noted above, while residential customers with National Grid, Eversource, and Unitil do not have choice when it comes to their delivery service, they can choose to receive their electric supply from one of three sources:

- **Basic Service:** An electric utility buys electric supply on behalf of its customers.
  - Rates change every 6 months based on market prices. This cost of supply is a pass-through cost for utilities, meaning the rate that customers are charged is the same amount that the utility pays for supply.

- **Municipal Aggregation/Community Choice Electricity:** A city/town buys electric supply on behalf of its residents.
  - Rates typically change less frequently (every 2-3 years).
  - Almost 70% of all Massachusetts municipalities have a Municipal Aggregation program.
    - Check here to see if your city/town has a program.

- **Competitive Supply:** An electric customer signs an individual contract to buy electric supply from a third-party supplier. Historically, Competitive Supply rates have been, on average, higher than Basic Service rates. See the AGO's annual reports and this newsletter's "Recent AGO Advocacy for Massachusetts Utility Customers" section for more details.
  - Competitive Supply rates change based on your contract type.
    - Fixed rate: same rate for a set amount of time.
    - Variable rate: rates change month-to-month.

Your current electric supplier is listed in the "Supply Service" or "Supplier" section on your electric bill.

- If the supplier name is the same as your utility, you are enrolled in Basic Service.
- If the supplier name includes your town/city name, you are enrolled in Municipal Aggregation. Some Municipal Aggregation programs automatically enroll residents, with the option to opt-out at any time. Accounts enrolled with Competitive Suppliers are not automatically enrolled into a city/town's Municipal Aggregation program.
- If the supplier name is neither your utility nor your Municipal Aggregation program, you are enrolled with a Competitive Supplier.

You can change between Basic Service and Municipal Aggregation at any time. If you are enrolled with a Competitive Supplier and want to switch to another form of supply, you must call your supplier directly and cancel your contract — **be aware of cancellation fees.**

Understanding your electric supply cost

Basic Service

SUPPLY RATES: AUGUST 1, 2026 – JANUARY 31, 2027				
	National Grid	**Eversource (East)**	**Eversource (West)**	**Unitil**
Supply Rate	$0.17185 /kWh (17.185 cents per kilowatt hour)	$0.17323/kWh (17.323 cents per kilowatt hour)	$0.15934/kWh (15.934 cents per kilowatt hour)	$0.18921/kWh (18.921 cents per kilowatt hour)

What does this mean?

Let's say you live in a 4-bedroom house and use an average of 650 kWh of electricity per month. If you multiply your usage (650 kWh) by the supply rate for your electric utility (see table above), you get your total electric supply costs for the month (see table below):

National Grid	**Eversource (East)**	**Eversource (West)**	**Unitil**
$111.70	$112.60	$103.57	$122.99

Remember, supply costs are only one part of your bill. **Your total bill will be supply costs plus delivery costs.**

*Note: This table is only a guide. Your monthly electric usage may be more or less than shown in the above example, which will change your total electric supply costs, and therefore your total bill. Usage can change based on household behavior, types of appliances, weather, etc.

Municipal Aggregation

If you live in a city or town with Municipal Aggregation, check your city or town's website for its supply rates. Many cities and towns that provide a Municipal Aggregation option often have several products available, including an electric supply option with higher renewable content.

Competitive Supply

If you are enrolled in Competitive Supply, compare your current electric supply rate with Basic Service (and, if available, Municipal Aggregation). Third-party supplier rates that may have once been competitive may no longer provide savings, particularly if the contract has expired and automatically renewed at a higher rate. You can return to Basic Service or enroll in Municipal Aggregation at any time after cancelling a Competitive Supply contract.

To file a complaint about a Competitive Supplier with the AGO, visit https://www.mass.gov/how-to/file-a-consumer-complaint.

Recent AGO Advocacy for Massachusetts Utility Customers

COMPETITIVE SUPPLY ANNUAL REPORT

In March 2026, the AGO released its latest annual report on the harm caused by the Competitive Supply market in Massachusetts. **This year's report highlighted that since 2018, residential customers who switched to Competitive Supply paid over $738.7 million more on their electric bills than they would have paid if they stayed on Basic Service.** From July 2024 to June 2025, net losses for residential customers totaled $87.4 million.

The report confirms that low-income customers continue to pay higher rates than non-low-income customers enrolled in Competitive Supply. From July 2024 to June 2025, low-income customers lost an average of $286 annually, compared to $181 for non-low-income customers.

Additionally, this report shows the Competitive Supply market affects the rates paid by all ratepayers—even those not enrolled with a Competitive Supplier—by driving up the cost of bill payment assistance programs, which are a critical policy tool to support low-income ratepayers who are severely impacted by unaffordable utility bills. These programs are funded by all ratepayers through charges on their utility bills. In the most recent report, the AGO found that Competitive Suppliers increased the cost of bill assistance programs by $9.6 million. By overcharging low-income customers, Competitive Suppliers unfairly profit and increase utility bills for everyone.

For many years, the AGO has supported legislation to protect Massachusetts residents by banning the Competitive Supply industry. The AGO also supports ongoing efforts by the Massachusetts House and Senate, as well as the Healey-Driscoll Administration, to find ways to meaningfully regulate the Competitive Supply industry.

FERC SIDES WITH AGO, ORDERS $1B REFUND AND $100M ANNUAL SAVINGS

In March 2026, FERC issued an order to cut the allowed return on equity (ROE) for New England transmission owners—the for-profit companies that own and operate the large power lines that carry electricity long distances. ROE is the profit these companies earn on transmission investments in the region. The FERC order comes after more than a decade of advocacy led by the AGO, alongside a coalition of New England state attorneys general, utility commissions, and consumer advocates. If upheld, this order will result in a refund of at least $1B million to New England ratepayers and more than $100 million in savings per year going forward.

AGO SECURES COURT WIN AGAINST TRUMP ADMINISTRATION WIND PERMIT FREEZE

On December 8, 2025, the AGO co-led a coalition of 18 attorneys general throughout the country and won their lawsuit against the Trump Administration over its unlawful order to halt all federal permitting of wind energy projects. Wind energy has no fuel cost and can provide affordable energy in places that need it most. In their lawsuit, the coalition argued this permitting freeze harmed states' efforts to secure reliable and affordable energy sources to meet their increasing demand for electricity and reduce emissions of harmful air pollutants. A federal court agreed, and the court's final order has successfully protected Massachusetts investments in offshore wind, well-paying jobs, and progress toward our climate goals.

OVER $174M IN RATEPAYER SAVINGS FROM RECENT DPU ORDERS ON GAS SYSTEM ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (GSEP) PLANS

On April 30, 2026, the DPU issued orders that reduce the amount that Massachusetts gas utilities can charge ratepayers for GSEP in a given year. The DPU also approved new risk prioritization guidelines to ensure the gas utilities are prioritizing the greatest risks to safety and system reliability.

Background:
On October 31, 2025, each gas utility filed a GSEP Plan with the DPU detailing its plans to address aging, leak-prone gas infrastructure. The AGO intervened in each GSEP proceeding and successfully argued that the costs of the GSEP programs were too high and burdensome for ratepayers.

ERA LAUNCHES NEW RATEPAYER RESOURCES

Electric Bill Assistance Sheets (English)

View full webpage for Electric Bill Assistance Sheets in Cape Verdean Creole, Haitian Creole, Khmer, Portuguese, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Save Money and Energy This Summer Sheets (English)

View full webpage for Save Money and Energy This Summer Sheets in Cape Verdean Creole, Haitian Creole, Khmer, Portuguese, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Winter Bill Information Sheets (English)

View full webpage for Winter Bill Information Sheets in Cape Verdean Creole, Haitian Creole, Khmer, Portuguese, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Competitive Supply Information Sheets (English)

View full webpage for Competitive Supply Information Sheets in Cape Verdean Creole, Haitian Creole, Khmer, Portuguese, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Public Participation at the Department of Public Utilities (DPU)

We encourage you to make your voice heard at the DPU. The DPU regulates and sets rates for electric, gas, and water utilities in Massachusetts. The DPU accepts written comment submissions and holds public hearings on many proceedings. Written and verbal comments are opportunities for you to share your concerns and suggestions. Public comments do not need to be technical but should focus on the issues relevant to the specific proceeding. Most importantly, your comments can and should reflect your personal experience as a customer. While public comments are not part of the evidentiary record, the DPU will consider public comments when ruling upon a utility's request to raise rates.

Proceeding Updates

RATE CASES

ERA continues advocating for ratepayers in utility rate cases, which are proceedings where a utility requests to increase their distribution rates. We would like to thank the ratepayers and local leaders who spoke at the rate case public hearings listed below and/or submitted public comments:

- Berkshire Gas (D.P.U. 25-170)
- Liberty Gas (D.P.U. 25-85)
- National Grid (Boston Gas Company) (D.P.U. 26-50)

On January 16, 2026, National Grid filed a request with state regulators for a $342 million (12%) increase in their gas base distribution rates. If the request is approved in full, this would raise residential heating bills by about $24-$25 per month, followed by additional increases each year over the next five years. This is an 8.4-9.4% increase, depending on your location within National Grid's service territory. The AGO is opposing this request.

ONGOING PROCEEDINGS

ERA also participates in other types of proceedings. Here are a few ongoing proceedings that may interest ratepayers:

- Utility Bill Investigation and Bill Re-Design (D.P.U. 25-200)
  - In December 2025, the DPU opened an investigation to review all delivery charges on electric and gas utility bills. The investigation will examine the causes of bill volatility and aims to promote better customer understanding of rates so that customers can take greater control over their energy bills.
  - The AGO filed comments in this investigation providing a broad range of recommendations to empower customers and reduce bill volatility. Our comments were informed by expert research on rates, charges, legislation, and customer experience. This research included individual interviews and focus groups that provided insights about customer experiences and preferences, documented in the report "MA Ratepayer Perspectives on Utility Bill Comprehension, Financial Stressors, and Affordability." The AGO's initial and reply comments can be found on the DPU File Room.

- Energy Burden Inquiry (D.P.U. 24-15)
  - In January 2024, the DPU opened a proceeding to look at residential energy burden (an energy burden is the percentage of a household's income spent on energy costs), with a focus on energy affordability. The goal of this proceeding is to improve the financial assistance programs offered by gas and electric companies and increase program enrollment.
  - In February 2026, the DPU ordered all gas and electric utilities to create a six-tiered discount rate for low-income customers. The income-based tiers follow the federal Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) income levels. Income-qualified customers will experience at least a 15% discount on their gas bills and a 25% discount on their electric bills each month. Utilities must have these new tiered discount rates in place by November 1, 2026.
  - This proceeding also addresses the topics of enrollment, eligibility, verification of eligibility, and outreach related to the low-income discount rates. The DPU created an Energy Burden Working Group (EBWG) for stakeholders to discuss these issues. The EBWG is co-chaired by representatives from the AGO, National Consumer Law Center, and the utilities. This spring, the EBWG published a report to the DPU based on meeting discussions: Recommendations for Low-Income Discount Rate Eligibility, Verification, Enrollment, and Ongoing Input

- Climate Compliance Plans (CCPs) (D.P.U. 25-40 through D.P.U. 25-44/45)
  - In April 2025, each gas utility company filed its first-ever CCP with the DPU. The DPU asked each company to demonstrate how it plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to meet state climate mandates.
  - On April 26, 2026, after a lengthy investigation, the AGO filed its initial CCP brief, which argues that the gas utilities failed to show how they will reduce greenhouse gas emissions to meet the Commonwealth's climate mandates. The AGO's brief also includes over a dozen recommendations to the DPU to help ensure a cost-effective, efficient clean energy transition.

NEW PROGRAM TO SUPPORT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN ENERGY REGULATORY PROCEEDINGS: INTERVENOR SUPPORT GRANT PROGRAM

On February 13, 2026, the DPU adopted final regulations to implement an Intervenor Support Grant Program (ISGP), which was established in a 2024 climate law. ERA has long supported the development of an ISGP, which was recommended by a Stakeholder Working Group convened by the AGO in 2021. The IGSP will promote a robust record in energy proceedings; elevate the voices of historically under-represented populations; and support environmental justice principles.

The goal of the ISGP is to create more opportunities for meaningful participation in energy-related regulatory proceedings and to ensure diverse perspectives are considered as we transition to an equitable and clean energy future. The ISGP provides financial assistance for eligible organizations, community groups, and certain governmental bodies that lack the financial resources to hire attorneys and experts to intervene in DPU and Energy Facilities Siting Board proceedings.

Groups can apply for ISGP funding starting July 1, 2026. Program funds are generally capped at $150,000 per entity per proceeding, $500,000 per proceeding overall, and $3.5 million per year. To learn more about the program and the grant application process, check out the DPU's webpage.

ERA will monitor the use of program funds to ensure that the ratepayer funded program is achieving its goals in a cost-effective manner.

Energy Savings Programs – Local Resources

ENERGY SAVER HOME LOAN PROGRAM (ESHLP)

The ESHLP provides financing and technical support to homeowners who want to cut their home's energy use and reduce their reliance on fossil fuels. These services are available to income-eligible homeowners of single-family homes or owner-occupants of one unit in a 2-4 family home. If you are eligible and want to complete energy-related home improvements, you can receive a loan of up to $100,000 at 2% interest for up to 20 years. The ESHLP is operated by MassHousing through the Massachusetts Community Climate Bank (MCCB). For program details, view the program's website.

MASSACHUSETTS ENERGY SAVINGS FINDER

Are you looking for affordable ways to reduce your home energy use and reliance on fossil fuels? This free search tool from MassHousing helps you identify local, state, and federal rebates, incentives, and tax credits for Massachusetts homeowners and renters.

REWIRING AMERICA PERSONAL ELECTRIFICATION PLANNER

Rewiring America created step-by-step guides for different electric projects you can do in your home.
Step 1: Enter information about your home and household into the Personal Electrification Planner.
Step 2: Get custom recommendations for which electric projects to tackle and when. The planner will provide:

- Estimates of costs, energy savings, and emissions reductions for each project.
- All the federal tax credits you may qualify for, allowing you to estimate the final cost of your projects before you begin.
- A tool to connect you with qualified contractors in your area.

BOSTON ENERGY SAVER PROGRAM

Boston Energy Saver is a new service from the City of Boston that helps Boston renters, homeowners, and small businesses upgrade their buildings for big savings. Check out the program website to set up an energy bill check-up, explore home energy improvement options, and learn about available discounts.

Consumer Resources

- ✦ If you are struggling to pay your energy bills, check out the DPU's webpage: Help paying your utility bill.
- ✦ For more information on your electric bill, check out the DPU's webpage: Understanding your electric bill and the AGO's webpage Frequently Asked Questions about Electric and Gas Utilities.
- ✦ To learn more about Basic Service, check out the DPU's webpage: Basic Service Information and Rates.
- ✦ To learn more about the electric industry in general, check out the DPU's resource hub: Information for Consumers about the Electric Industry.

Consumer Contacts

If you have questions about your utility bill or need billing help, contact your utility directly:

- Eversource West
  - Electric: (877) 659-6326
  - Gas: (800) 688-6160
- Eversource East
  - Electric: (800) 592-2000
  - Gas: (800) 592-2000
- National Grid
  - Electric: (800) 322-3223
  - Gas: (800) 233-5325
- Unitil (888) 301-7700

To learn more about Mass Save® and explore energy saving options for your home:

- (866) 527-7283
- https://www.masssave.com/

To file a consumer complaint about any business, including an energy-related business (utility, Competitive Supplier, solar company, home improvement contractor, etc.), contact the AGO:

- Consumer Hotline: (617) 727-8400
- https://www.mass.gov/how-to/file-a-consumer-complaint

To file a complaint about National Grid, Eversource or Unitil, contact the DPU Consumer Division (not applicable for MLP customers):

- (617) 737-2836
- (877) 886-5066
- https://www.mass.gov/forms/massachusetts-department-of-public-utilities-consumer-complaint-form